

Senators Question UPI News Service To Foreign Agents

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Staff Reporter

Sen. J. William Fulbright (D-Ark.) yesterday questioned UPI's special service does not involve it in United Press International's special pleading. It provides only facts, most of which would be available to clients service to nonjournalistic from more careful reading of clients, including some firms newspapers.

representing foreign govern- Four Firms Named
ments.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee learned about the wire service's Special Service Bureau during the Committee's investigation of foreign lobbyists, and called UPI officials in to explain how it works.

UPI spokesmen said the service was a small and not very profitable byproduct of UPI's world-wide operation of gathering news for client newspapers and other news media. The special service provides "factual" information business clients which do not go on the news wire to newspapers, they said. In some cases, they said, the reporter gathering the information may not know for whom it was obtained.

Sub-Agent

Fulbright said his concern was this: When UPI contracts with a public relations firm representing a foreign government to provide information, UPI's reporters "in effect become sub-agents for the foreign government." They might unknowingly provide information "prejudicial to the foreign policy of the United States," said Fulbright.

Fulbright asked Earl J. Johnson, vice president and editor of UPI, if UPI permits its reporters to hold outside public relations jobs.

Johnson said UPI forbids this because it "would conflict with their job."

"That strikes me as a very sound policy," said Fulbright. "Why don't you feel that way about UPI itself?"

Fulbright read the names of four public relations firms representing foreign governments which have "used the query service" of UPI's Special Service Bureau at one time or another during the past three years.

The firms, all headquartered in New York, were: Julius Klein Public Relations Inc., which represents German interests; Hill & Knowlton, which has represented Japan and Liberia; Selvage & Lee, representing Portuguese interests; and Ruder & Finn, which has represented Israeli investment interests.

Johnson described one incident in which UPI obtained for Hill & Knowlton a "pamphlet being circulated among Ghanaian exiles in London." Hill & Knowlton delivered the document to the Liberian government.

Fulbright said he would have thought the Liberian embassy in London might have picked one up.

Johnson said none of UPI's reporters covering Congress have been assigned to provide information for the service.

Trujillo Used INS

Earlier, Fulbright released testimony that in 1956 the old International News Service distributed dispatches financed by the late Dominican Republic dictator Rafael Trujillo. INS and United Press were merged into UPI in 1950.

The testimony was given by Richard Klemfuss, former official of the Dominican Republic Information Center

which sought to create a favorable image of the Trujillo regime, and John Nagel, former manager of the INS special service division and now sales manager of UPI's special service.

The dispatches were described as twice-monthly compilations of Communist and anti-Communist activity in the Western Hemisphere.

INS was paid \$6000 during a three-month period for the articles, which were distributed by both Klemfuss and INS. An affidavit from Phillip G. Reed, another former INS official, stated that as a general rule INS reporters were not made aware that an assignment given them originated with the special service rather than the news desk.

Occasionally, special service material was sent out as news stories, Reed said.

The Committee also heard yesterday from Robert N. Taylor of McLean, Va., head of U. S. Press Association which sends out editorials free to 1399 small newspapers around the country. Taylor's paying clients are businesses, including some firms representing foreign governments, which hire him to write, or furnish him already written, editorials which he tries to get before the public.

The Dominican Republic Information Center was also one of Taylor's clients. One editorial he sent out called Trujillo's land "one of the cleanest, healthiest, happiest countries" on the face of the earth. One paper which has used Taylor's editorials is the Northwest Arkansas Times of Fayetteville, whose president is Fulbright.